



ART. IV.—*Early Moslem Accounts of the Hindu Religion.*

By E. REHATSEK.

[Read 6th April 1878.]

The Arabs sailed in very early times not only to India, but even as far as China, for the purpose of trading ; Proliminary Historical and Geographical remarks. their warlike expeditions, however, to this country began only after the promulgation of Islám. Not less than three expeditions to India appear to have taken place at short intervals during the khalifate of O'mar, A.H. 16 (A.D. 637), but their military forces were not great. The first started from O'man, and the second from Bahrayin ; the former effected a landing at Tannah, not far from Bombay, the latter at Broach, and a third expedition proceeded to the mouth of the Indus. A'bdullah B. A'bdullah invaded Mekrán during the last year of the just-mentioned khalif's reign, A.H. 23 (A.D. 643-4), by land, to repel an invasion of the king of Sind, whom he had defeated before, and whose country he would have invaded, had not the khalif prohibited him from doing so, in a letter the text of which begins, according to Tabari as follows :—"Do not cross the boundaries of Mekrán ; you have nothing to do with Sind," &c.<sup>1</sup> This letter was despatched in consequence of the following information given to O'mar by the messenger who had brought him the news of A'bdullah's victory over the king of Sind :—"Commander of the Faithful ! It is a country of which the mountains are mountains indeed, and the plains of which are real mountains ; it is a country with so little water that its dates are the worst of dates, and the inhabitants the most warlike of men. If thou hadst a more numerous army there, it would be annihilated, and could do nothing ; and if thy army is considerable it will perish of hunger, because there are no victuals ; the country beyond it is still worse." Reinaud<sup>2</sup> mentions that the Khalif O'thmán had sent an Arab to explore on the side of Khorásán, of Sejestán, and of Mekrán, the Indus valley, and the adjacent countries ; but this Arab seems so have been so impressed by the aridity which prevails in a portion of these vast regions that

<sup>1</sup> See my "Subjugation of Persia by the Moslems", *Jour. Bo. Br. R. As. Soc.*, Vol. XI., p. 217.

<sup>2</sup> *Fragments Arabes and Persans*, &c., p. xx.

all further ideas of conquest were abandoned, the more so as the subjugation of Persia had taken place, and afterwards internecine struggles among the Arabs prevented them from invading remote countries. The spirit of conquest revived, however, as soon as the celebrated Hejáj, governor of the two E'ráks, had obtained permission from the khaliif Valyd, the son and successor of A'bdul-malek, to make an invasion of India. Accordingly Muḥammad Harún was sent to Mekrán A.H. 86 (A.D. 705), but the subjugation of the Indus valley began only A.H. 93 (A.D. 711-12), when Muḥammad B. Kásem, a cousin of Hejáj, embarked in Shyráz and arrived with six thousand Arabs at Daybál, which he attacked and took.<sup>3</sup> According to Gildemeister, Daybál is a corrupted form of *Deralá*, a divine abode or temple, whilst Reinaud was of opinion that it is the present Karachi, and Ferishta that it is Thatha. The account of Ferishta of the taking of Daybál is too well known to be inserted in this place, but the description of the temple by Beladory, who wrote several centuries earlier, is as follows:—"At Daybál there was a large Bodd surmounted by a tall mast, upon which there was a red flag, which, when the wind blew, floated over the town. The Bodd is said to be a great minaret, containing one or several idols; the idol is placed in the minaret itself. The Hindus give in general the name of Bodd to everything constituting a part of their religion, or an object of their veneration. Also an idol is called a Bodd." This passage indicates, according to Reinaud, a Buddhist temple, but may also apply to a *stúpa*, a kind of tower often connected with temples. The flagstaff or mast just mentioned having been struck down by means of projectiles shot from an engine called *a'rusek* عروسك by Beladory, the town soon fell into the hands of the Arabs; and the reason for aiming at this flagstaff is by Ferishta stated to be the fact that the top of it contained the talisman, the fall whereof would immediately cause the subjugation of the place.

The description of Daybál by Edrisi, which his translator writes Dibál, is as follows:—"The town of Dibál ديبال is very populous, although its soil is but little fertile, and produces scarcely any other

---

except date trees. The mountains there are arid, and the plains barren. The houses are built of earth and of wood, but the country is inhabited only because it is a station for ships from Sind, and others. Commerce in a great variety of articles is carried on with much intelligence. Ships loaded with the produce of O'mán, as well as vessels from China and India, come to Dibál. They bring cloth and other articles from China, as also perfumes and aromatic substances from India. The inhabitants (of Dibál), who are usually very rich, purchase these goods by wholesale, and keep them till the departure of the ships, when they begin to be scarce. Then they sell them, trade in the country, and lay out their capital on interest, or use it as they think best. Between the mouth of the great Mehrán *مهران الكبير* (the Indus)<sup>6</sup> and Dibál six miles are counted turning to the west. Nirún is midway between Dibál and the victorious Mançúrah *منصوره*. It is there that persons going from the one town to the other cross the river." According to Reinaud (*Mém. Géogr.*, &c., p. 239), the town of Byrún was situate nearly midway between Daybál and Mançúrah, but somewhat nearer to the latter. It was on the western bank of the Indus. Opposite to Byrún on the other side of the river, Manhatery, the place through which persons going from Mançúrah to Daybál passed, was situated. Al-Eç-fakhry<sup>7</sup> who wrote in the tenth century, informs us that Mançúrah was in his time a mile in length and in breadth, and surrounded by a canal flowing from the river Mehrán; the inhabitants were Moslems, and dressed like the people of E'rák.

After taking Daybál, Muḥammad B. Kāsem marched along the western bank of the river and conquered Mīher, whose forces amounted, according to Ferishta, to 50,000 cavalry, composed of Rajpúts, Sindis, and Multánis; then he crossed the river and took the fortress which Albyrúny and Ferishta call Brahmanábád, whilst others assert that its true name was Bahmanábád, an old city said to have been founded by Bahman, the son of Gushtasp, when the Indus valley was a Persian province. This ancient city began to decay very quickly after the foundation of Mançúrah, where the Arab Amyrs took up their residence. Afterwards authors even confounded the two places with each other, and the changing bed of the Indus has made it a very difficult matter to as-

<sup>6</sup> Edrisi wrote in the 12th century, and Abulfeda, born A.H. 672 (A.D. 1273), in his *Geography*, also calls the river Indus sometimes *Mehrán*, but sometimes also *the river Sind*.

<sup>7</sup> Trausl. A. D. Mordtmann, p. 83.



him : then peace was made, and the King of India paid tribute and put on the robe of honour (implying vassalage) ; he refused, however, to put on the girdle, but Yamyun-al-daulah forced him to do so." <sup>11</sup>

*Edrisi's account of King Bellhara, and opinion of Hindu character, &c.* <sup>11a</sup>

"Barūh بروح [Broach] is a large, handsome town, well built of bricks and plastered. Its inhabitants are rich, fond of trading, and addicted to speculations as well as to distant expeditions. It is a station for ships coming from China, as well as for those coming from Sind. From it to Ceymūr نهرور two, and to Nahrāwāra نهروار <sup>11b</sup> eight days are required for accomplishing the journey, through a flat country. As to the town of Nahrāwāra, it is governed by a great prince who takes the title of Bellhara, wears a golden crown on his head, and dresses in rich clothes ; he rides much on horseback—especially once a week, accompanied by his wives only, to the number of one hundred, wearing costly garments, with gold and silver rings on their feet and hands, and their hair plaited. They perform games and sham fights, whilst the king precedes them. The viziers and commanders of the troops never accompany the king except when he goes to attack rebels, or to oppose the enterprises of the neighbouring kings, who desire to obtain a footing within the boundaries of his country. He possesses many elephants, which constitute the principal force of his army. His power is hereditary, as well as the title of Bellhara which he bears, and which means *king of kings*. The town of Nahrāwāra is frequented by a great number of Musalmān traders, who betake themselves thither for their business. There they are honourably received by the king and his ministers, and there they find protection and security.

"The Hindus are naturally inclined to justice, and they never swerve from it in their acts. Their good faith, their loyalty, their faithfulness to engagements, are known ; they are so renowned for these good qualities that men crowd to them from everywhere, and their country flourishes, and their situation prospers. Among other cha-

<sup>11</sup> *Annales*, t. II., p. 614.

<sup>11a</sup> *T. I.*, pp. 177 seq.

<sup>11b</sup> This word Ferishta (I., p. ۵۴) spells Nahrwālah, نهرول, and believes to be Patan in Guzerat ; but Ceymūr is Chaul. See *History and Antiquities of Chaul*, by Dr. G. da Cunha, pp. 9 seq., where numerous authorities are adduced, and the point is fully discussed.



“Opposite to the seaport of Barúh بروح the island of Mullan مَلَن is situated, which produces a quantity of pepper and is two days distant from Sindán سِنْدَان.”

It has been observed that Edrisi speaks of a king who takes “the title of Belhara,” but according to Eçṭakhry<sup>14</sup> there existed also a country and a town of that name, for he says:—“From Kāmbaya to Saymūr Hindu kings reign in the Belhara country, and it is a land of infidels; nevertheless Moslems live in these towns, and before Belhara only Moslem towns with chief mosques are to be met with. The town Belhara, which is situated there, is one of the largest; and a large kingdom belongs to it.” Belhara is perhaps the Arabic corruption of Valabhi Ráy or Rajah, the sovereign of Valabhipura in Guzerat; or of Málwa Ráy, according to Reinaud.

*Remarks on Kanój and Tanéser.*

The empire of Kanój, which Ferdausy makes so much of, had already decayed when the Arabs invaded India; Mirkhond and Ferishta, who has generally followed his statements, both mention Kanój and Tanéser in the repeated invasions of Maḥmúd the Ghaznavide, when he took enormous treasures from the multitude of temples contained chiefly in these two, but also in numerous other towns. Even in the time of Albyrúny, who accompanied the conqueror, the city of Kanój was deteriorating more and more, for he says:—“The town of Kanój is situated on the western bank of the Ganges. It occupies a very considerable space; at present, however, the greatest portion is falling into ruin and is uninhabited, because the seat of government has been transferred to Bády, east of the Ganges, to a distance of three or four days.<sup>15</sup> In the same way as Kanój is celebrated for having given rise to the sons of Pandawa, so also the town of Mahura (Mathura) is celebrated for having given birth to Vasudéva (the father of Krishna). Mahura is on the east bank of the river Jún (Jumna). Between these two towns there is a distance of 28 parasangs. The town of Tanéser is situated between the Ganges and the Jumna to the north of these two towns, at about 80 parasangs from Kanój, and nearly 50 parasangs from Mahura.” Albyrúny, and after him Mirkhond, Ferishta, and others, narrate how a certain statue was taken in Tanéser and transported to Ghazna. This was, no doubt, a statue of Vishnu, and Albyrúny adds

<sup>14</sup> p. 82.

<sup>15</sup> *Fragments Arabes*, p. 100.



that its name was *Tchakra Sravi*, or 'lord of the *tchakra*,' the *tchakra* being a wheel or disk, used also as a projectile in war. The name of the statue taken to Ghazna was, according to Ferishta, "جک سوم *Jagsúm*, which appears to be only his rendering of *Jaga Sravi*, 'lord of the world;' according to the same author, untold riches were taken from Tanésér, and among them a ruby of extraordinary size.

*Accounts of various authors about the idol of Multán.*

As we possess a narrative written by the Chinese pilgrim Hiouen-Thsang in the seventh century, consequently about four hundred years before Albyrúny, Account of Hiouen-Thsang. it will perhaps not be altogether irrelevant to insert it before that of the Arab author, because it may be of interest to compare several descriptions. Hiouen-Thsang says of Multán:—"The inhabitants love study and esteem virtue. There are many who follow the worship of the spirits of heaven (namely, the Brahman religion); only a small number observe the precepts of Buddha. The Samanean convents, ten in number, are mostly in ruins; only a few monks can be seen in them, and they are destitute of zeal. At the same time there are eight temples dedicated to the spirits of heaven. The heretics and the orthodox live mixed together. A magnificent temple dedicated to the Sun may be observed; the statue of the god is of massive gold and adorned with the costliest things. This god is endued with marvellous penetration, and on beholding him a man experiences the effects of his power. At all times female musicians cause melodious concerts to be heard, and during the night brilliant torches spread out the clearness of day. In this temple perfumes are incessantly burnt, and offerings presented. The kings and the high families of the five Indies consider it an honour to offer costly objects there. There is a house, called 'the house of happiness,' where provisions and medicines are distributed to the indigent and to the sick. At all times a thousand men, who have come from various parts of India, may be seen addressing their vows to the sun. All round the temple there are tanks and blooming shrubberies, where people walk about with delight." In the seventh century the worship of Vi-hnu had already made great progress in Multán, and to this Hiouen-Thsang alludes when he says that many observe the worship of spirits, and few the precepts of Buddha.



certain, that the body is not in contact with the free air. The two eyes consist of two precious stones, and on the head there is a golden crown. The statue extends its arms on the knees, and has the fingers of the two hands separated like a person counting the number four."<sup>22</sup>

According to Eṣṭakhry,<sup>23</sup> "Multān is about half the size of Manṣūrah;

Account of Eṣṭakhry. in it there is an idol which the Hindus

esteem very highly, and to which they undertake pilgrimages from the most distant parts of India; they annually bring to the idol great riches, which they dedicate to the temple and to the permanent inhabitants thereof. The temple of this idol is a castle situated in the most populous locality in the market of Multān, between the market of the workers in ivory and the street of the copper-smiths. In the middle of this castle there is a cupola under which the idol is placed; around the cupola there are houses for the servants of the idol, and for the permanent inhabitants of the temple. In Sind and in Hind there are no worshippers of this idol, excepting those who live in its vicinity. The idol is in human form, on a seat of bricks and lime, covered with a skin resembling red leather, so that of its whole body only the eyes can be seen. Some believe that this body is of wood, whilst some believe that it is of another substance, but nobody is allowed to see this body. Its eyes are two precious stones;

<sup>22</sup> With reference to the manner of counting four, the *Farhang-i-Jahāngīrī*, which contains a lengthy article on expressing numbers by means of the fingers, in order to strike bargains unknown to other persons, has the following statement:

از برای واحد خنصر دست راست فرو باید گرفت و جبّه انگشتان بنصروا با خنصر ضم کردن و جبّه تنه وسطی را نیز وایکن درین سه عقد باید روم اناامل نیک نزدیک اصول اصابع باشد و جبّه اربعه خنصروا رفع باید کرد و بنصروا وسطی را معتقد گذاشتن

<sup>23</sup> "To indicate the number one, let the little finger (خنصر) be raised."



Indus, and in many temples the lingam could be seen exposed to the veneration of the people. But the lingam of Somnât enjoyed much higher consideration, as Ganges water and flowers from Kashmir were offered to it daily. According to the opinion of the Hindus, this figure cured chronic diseases and other evils for which no natural remedy exists. The position of Somnât was favourable to the great influx of strangers, as it was a station for ships sailing from Sofala, on the coast of Africa, to China. When Mahmûd the Ghaznavide took Somnât, A. H. 416 [A.D. 1025], the stone was broken to pieces; Mahmûd caused the upper part to be taken away, and carried it to Ghazna, his capital. Two pieces were made of it, one being placed on the *maydan* of Ghazna with the idol brought from Tanéser, and the other served as a threshold of the great mosque."

Mirkhond<sup>25</sup> states that when an eclipse of the moon took place, more than a hundred thousand worshippers assembled to adore the idol of Somnât, which they believed to be also the cause of the ebb and tide of the sea. Offerings were brought from the outermost limits of India to the temple, to which also the revenues of nearly ten thousand villages belonged. The temple contained precious stones to such an amount that not one-tenth of it could be equalled in value by the treasury of any king, and two thousand Brahmans were engaged in worship in the temple. From a golden chain weighing two hundred *man* golden bells were suspended, which the servants rang at appointed times to call the Brahmans to worship. Also three hundred barbers, and as many musicians, with five hundred dancing girls, were attached to the temple, with allowances from the offerings and bequests for their maintenance, and many persons were employed for the purpose of bringing, from the river Ganges, water with which the idol was washed.

The temple which contained Somnât was of considerable length and breadth, supported by fifty-six columns. Somnât was an *idol* sculptured of stone about five *gaz* and three cubits above the ground, and two cubits concealed under it. When Mahmûd entered the temple, he broke the idol with a heavy club, and ordered a part of the stone to be carried to Ghazna, where it was thrown down on the threshold of the great mosque. The riches obtained for the Sultân's treasury from the temple of Somnât amounted to more than twenty million dirhems of gold, as the temple consisted wholly of that metal, and contained

<sup>25</sup> Vol. IV., pp. 7-8.

sixty columns encrusted with rubies, sapphires, and emeralds, each of these columns bearing the name of one of the great kings of India. As the account of Ferishta<sup>26</sup> is the same as that of Mirkhond, it would be very much of a repetition to insert it; the first-mentioned author speaks of another temple of Shiva, whom he names Mahákál,—by which name he is also called in much earlier works, such as the *Kitáb-al-fihrist* and Shahrastány, as will appear further on,—which was taken by the Sultán Shams-al-din Altamsh of Dehly; he says<sup>27</sup>:—“In the year six hundred and thirty-one [A.D. 1233-4] he invaded the country of Málwah, subjugated the fort of Bhyásah, and took also the town of Ojayn, which contained a very strong temple of Mahákál, built like the temple of Somnát, and completed during a period of three hundred years. This temple was one hundred *gaz* high, but he demolished it, taking away the statue of Rajah Vikramaditya,—who had been one of the kings of Ojayn, and according to whose era the Hindus reckon their time till now,—with the stone [lingam] of Mahákál, as well as several other statues of molten brass, which were placed on the ground along the road to the great mosque of Dehly, that the people might tread them under foot.”

Although Hiouen-Thsang, who visited Peshawur—Purushapura—four hundred years before Albyrúny, speaks of its Vihára as already in a state of decay,<sup>28</sup> it still existed in the time of the last-mentioned author,<sup>29</sup> and when *Abulfaraj Muḥammad B. Eshák al Warrák al Baghdádi*, the author of the *Kitáb al-fihrist*, wrote (A.H. 377, A.D. 987) in it his remarks on the sects of India, Buddhism was not yet extinguished, and he uses the expression *Budadah* as well as *Bud*; he also describes a Buddhist town and temple, which appears to be no other than Monghyr, not far from Patna,—Pataliputra,—on the bank of the Ganges. This account of the Hindu sects, although discussed, has, I believe, not yet been fully translated, and it will be seen further on that Shahrastány—who has been translated into German by Haarbrücker, whose full account of Hindu sects will likewise be given—has borrowed some of his explanations from the *Kitáb-al-fihrist*, as may be concluded from a comparison of both.

<sup>26</sup> Vol. I., pp. 154 seq., Bombay Govt. lithogr. edition.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 115.

<sup>28</sup> *Frag. Arabes*, &c., p. 78. The following are the words of Hiouen-Thsang:—“Two-storied pavilions and bolvidores raised above each other, a tower of several stories, and a deep grotto could be seen. Although this monument is falling to ruin, it may still be called a masterpiece of art,” &c.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 76.

## KITAB-AL-FIHRIST.

(pp. ۲۴۶—۲۴۸.)

In the portion translated by me I read the following account:—

## Sects of India.

“A book containing the religions and rites of India. I finished the composition of

this book from other books on Friday, three nights having elapsed of the month Muḥarrem in the year two hundred and forty-nine [28th Feb. 863].” I do not know who the author of the account in this book may be, but I recognized it to be in the handwriting of Ya'qūb Ben Esahak Alkindi,<sup>30</sup> word by word; and beneath this translation I read the following words in the same handwriting:—“Some orators have narrated that Yahya Ben Khāled the Barmekide<sup>31</sup> had sent a man to India for the purpose of bringing him the medicines existing in that country, and to describe the religions of it; accordingly he composed this book.” Muḥammad Ben Esahak states that “during the government of the Arabs Yahya Ben Khāled and the family of the Barmekides concerned themselves about India, and bringing from it scholars, physicians, and philosophers.”

“The largest of the houses, one farsakh in length, is at Mankyr<sup>32</sup>; this is the city where the Belhara<sup>33</sup> resides;

Names of the places of worship in India, their description, and the state of the Budadah.<sup>32</sup>

it is forty farsakhs long, [and built] of ebony and various kinds of wood. It is said that the common people there have a million elephants for transporting their merchandise.

In the stalls of the king there are sixty thousand elephants, and the fullers possess one hundred and twenty thousand of them [!]. In this house of Budadah there are about twenty thousand Bud of various kinds of substances, such as gold, silver, iron, copper, brass, ivory, and different kinds of artificial<sup>33a</sup> precious stones, encrusted

<sup>30</sup> A celebrated philosopher, known to Europeans of the Middle Ages as a magician and astrologer only; but the researches of Dr. Fleischer, Dieterici, and other prominent Arabists have made him better known as a philosopher.

<sup>31</sup> The well-known Vizier of Harūn-Al-Rashyd, who reigned from A.D. 786 to 809.

<sup>32</sup> Although the usual word for idol is *ḥanām*, the Arabs appear to have sometimes expressed it also by *Bud*, which originally designated a statue representing *Buddha*, and became in Persian *Bud*, the usual name for any idol.

<sup>33</sup> It is proper to observe here that Maḡūlī (opud Reinand, *Mém. géogr.*, &c., p. 144) calls also the capital of Malwa Mānekyr or Mānakyr.

<sup>34</sup> It has already been observed that Reinand considers him to be *Mānekyr*.

<sup>33a</sup> This I translate according to the editor's suggestion, who believes that *مصنوعة* is implied by *مختلفة* of the text.

with costly gems. To this house the king walks every year once, but returns riding. It contains an idol of gold twelve cubits high, on a golden throne. In the centre there is a cupola of gold, the whole being encrusted with white precious stones, unperforated pearls, red, yellow, blue and green rubies. To this idol they immolate victims, and they bring most of them on a certain appointed day of the year.

"The house of Multán<sup>35</sup> is said to be one of the seven [chief] houses. It contains an iron idol seven cubits long, in the centre of the cupola, attracted from all sides by the concentrated power of loadstones, but it is said to have been bent on one side, on account of some accident which befell it; and this [other] house [of Bámyán] is on the flank of a mountain, being a cupola one hundred and eighty cubits high, to which Hindus come on pilgrimage, from the outermost regions of their country, by land and by sea, but the road to it from Balkh is straight, as the cultivated country of Multán [Bámyán] is near the cultivated country of Balkh. And on the top of the mountain and on its sides there are houses for the worshippers and hermits. They have places for immolating victims, and for offerings, which are said never to have been even for an hour without pilgrims visiting them. They have two idols, one of which is called *Junkubut*, چنكبُت, and the other *Zunbukat*, زُنْبُكَت.<sup>36</sup> These two idols have been sculptured in relievo on the two sides of a great valley from the rock of the mountain; the height of each of them is eighty cubits, and they may be seen from a considerable distance. It is said that the Hindus go on pilgrimage to these two idols, and bring with them offerings and fumigatories. If the eye of a man happens to alight on the two idols at a distance, he must respectfully droop them; but, if he looks at them either by accidentally turning or by mistake, he must again go back to the spot from which he could not perceive them, and then casting his eyes respectfully to the ground he is again to advance towards them. A man who has seen these two idols stated to me that not a little blood is shed near them, and it is believed sometimes to happen that fifty thousand or more persons sacrifice their own lives; but God knows best.

<sup>35</sup> It appears from what follows that those remarks cannot apply to Multán, but rather to Bámyán, although Edrisi (t. I., p. 177) says nothing about its colossal idols, and calls the place Námyán, نَامِيَان.

<sup>36</sup> *Mém. géogr.*, &c., p. 289, has *Jumbukt*, چنكبُت, and *Zunbukt*, زُنْبُكَت.



## KITAB-AL-FIHRIST.

(pp. ۳۴۶—۳۴۸.)

In the portion translated by me I read the following account :—

Sects of India. . . . .  
 "A book containing the religions and rites of India. I finished the composition of this book from other books on Friday, three nights having elapsed of the month Muḥarrem in the year two hundred and forty-nine [28th Feb. 863]." I do not know who the author of the account in this book may be, but I recognized it to be in the handwriting of Ya'qūb Ben Esahak Alkindi,<sup>30</sup> word by word; and beneath this translation I read the following words in the same handwriting:—"Some orators have narrated that Yahya Ben Khāled the Barmekide<sup>31</sup> had sent a man to India for the purpose of bringing him the medicines existing in that country, and to describe the religions of it; accordingly he composed this book." Muḥammad Ben Esahak states that "during the government of the Arabs Yahya Ben Khāled and the family of Barmekides concerned themselves about India, and bringing from one Mek scholars, physicians, and philosophers."  
 he largest of the houses, one farsakh in length, is at . . . in breadth, but its . . . this is the city where . . . precious stones; in it there . . . the places of it is forty farsakh . . . and other precious wonderful stones . . . India, their . . . Site pearls, each of which is like a bird's egg and larger than it. He also believes that trustworthy men among the people of India have informed him that the rain glances off from the top, from the right, and from the left side of this house, so that it is not struck thereby; torrents likewise deflect from it, flowing away on the right and on the left . . . . Abu Dulaf also told me that the Hindus

<sup>30</sup> The account of Hionen-Thsang is this :—"The kingdom of Fan-yan-na has two thousand li from east to west, and three thousand li from south to north. The inhabitants are Buddhists . . . . On the flank of the mountain, situated to the north-east of the royal city, there is a statue of Fo [Buddha] carved in the rock; it is from a hundred and forty to a hundred and fifty feet high; it is all brilliant with gold, and loaded with costly ornaments, which are of dazzling splendour."

<sup>31</sup> "And Multān was called Faraj," *فسميت اولتان فرج*: Beladory, p. 44.  
 "And Multān is the Faraj of gold:" Maḥṣūdī, I, p.p. 207, &c., note 11 of the editor.

<sup>32</sup> By Abu Dulaf the traveller and poet is meant, he who accompanied, about A.H. 331 (A.D. 942-43), a Chinese embassy returning from Bokhārā to the court of the Emperor. He is called Alyanbu'y, *الينبوي*, because he was a native of Yanbu', a station near Mekkah, through which the pilgrims to the Ka'bah passed. See note 12 of the editor of the *Kitāb-al-fihrist*.

is the hide of an elephant, from which blood is dripping, and which is fastened in front with the skin of the elephant's feet. In one of his hands he holds a large open-mouthed dragon, in the second a stick, in the third a human skull, whilst the fourth is uplifted. In his two ears he has two snakes for earrings, and over his body two large dragons are entwined. On his head he wears a crown of human skulls, and on his neck a collar of the same material. They believe him to be a demon from among the Satans, deserving of worship on account of his great power, as well as for his other qualities, some of which are laudable and amiable, whilst others are blameable and hateful; he can ward off or inflict misfortunes, grant or withhold benefits, and is to them a refuge in calamities.

"These are worshippers of the sun; they have an idol of it on a chariot drawn by four horses. The idol holds in its hand a precious stone which has the colour of fire. They

The Dynkytyah.<sup>47</sup>

believe the sun to be one of the angels to whom service and adoration is due. Accordingly, they adore this idol, and walk round it with musical instruments; it has also landed property with its revenues, as well as servants and officers for administering the affairs of the idol and its property. Worship is performed thrice daily, and various opinions concerning it are current. Persons afflicted with various diseases, such as leprosy, paralysis, and other chronic as well as transient maladies, remain near the idol, watch during the night, adore and implore it to cure them; they neither eat nor drink, but fast for it; and a sick person remains in this state till he sees a vision in his sleep, as if one were saying to him, 'Thou art cured, and hast obtained thy wish.' It is said that the idol speaks to him in his sleep, so that he gets well and recovers his health.

"They are worshippers of the moon, and say that it is one of the angels

The Jandryhakanyah.<sup>48</sup>

الجند ريهكنية

to whom honour and service is due. Their custom is to make an idol for it in the shape of a calf which is drawn by four ducks.<sup>49</sup>

The idol holds in its hand a precious stone called Jandarkyt. It is a

<sup>47</sup> This word had no diacritical points at all in the MS. Reinaud had before him; and he pointed it thus—*الدينكيتية*, which is to be read *Al-Aditi-Baktyah*, 'the sun-worshippers,' which is good (see his *Mém.*, p. 292). Shahrastāny (vol. II., p. ۴۵۲) has *الدينكيتية*, *Aldynkytyah*, like the *Kitāb-al-jihrist*.

<sup>48</sup> The proper spelling of this word would be *Tchandrakaktyah*, *چندر هبککیتیه*.

<sup>49</sup> 'Swans,' according to Reinaud, *loco laudato*, p. 293.

part of their religion to worship it, and to fast one-half of each month; nor does anyone break the fast until the moon rises; then they offer to the idol of it food, drink, milk, adore it, look at the moon and ask it concerning their affairs; and after having adored it they descend from the housetops, eat, drink, rejoice and play; they look at it only with a pleased countenance; and when they have in the moiety of the month completed their fast they dance, play, and perform on musical instruments before the moon and the idol.

“Among these [namely, the Anshanyah, *الانشانية*] there is a sect called *Al-Bakrantynyah*, *البكرنتينية*,<sup>51</sup> the followers of which gird themselves with iron; their law is to shave their heads, and beards, and to bare their bodies excepting only the sexual parts. According to their tenets they neither teach anyone nor speak to a person until he has entered their religion; but after having done so they command him to be truthful and humble. Nor can a neophyte gird himself with iron until he has attained a degree [of perfection] whereby he becomes worthy to do so. They gird themselves from the middle of the body to the breast, lest their bellies should, as they believe, burst, from their great learning and the force of meditation.

“Another sect is called *Al-Gangáyātrah*, *الكنكاياترة*, scattered over the whole of India. According to their law any man committing a great sin must, either after a brief or a long period, bathe in the river *Al-Kyf*, *الكيف*,<sup>52</sup> whereby he becomes purified.

“Another sect is called *Al-Ráhmārynah*, *الراحمرينة*,<sup>53</sup> They are partizans of kings, and it is a part of their law in their religion to aid kings. They say:—‘God the Creator—Whose name be blessed and exalted—has made them kings, and if we be slain in their service we go to paradise.’

“Another sect wears long hair, according to its tenets, plaiting the same on all sides of the face, and keeping the head covered therewith. Their law is not to drink wine; they also have a mountain called *Jaura'n*, *چورعن*,<sup>54</sup> to which they go on pilgrimage. When they see a

<sup>50</sup> *Anaṇana*, the not eating—fasting.

<sup>51</sup> See, further on, the account of Shahrastāny on the same sect.

<sup>52</sup> This is no doubt a mistake of the MSS. for *الكنكى*, *Al-Gang*, the Ganges.

<sup>53</sup> This word had no diacritical points at all in the MSS., and the first syllable was by Brockhaus, Reinaud, and others considered to be *Raj*; if such be the case the whole word may perhaps be *Rajputriah*.

<sup>54</sup> The real name of this mountain has not yet become known.

woman they flee from her ; and in this mountain, to which they go on pilgrimage, they have a great house [temple], of which this is the picture."<sup>55</sup>

*Hindu deities in the sixth century of our era.*

The lamented Dr. Bháu Dáji discovered in a commentary on the *Khaṇḍa Khāḍya* of Brahmagupta, by Āmarāja, the following passage :—"Varāha Mihira Āchārya went to heaven in the 509th [year] of the Śaka Kāla, i.e. A.D. 587." The statues of the deities worshipped during the time of Varāha Mihira were described by him in his *Sanhita*, whence Albyrūny obtained an account of them. It is here given as it occurs in Reinaud's *Mémoire géographique, scientifique et historique sur l'Inde*, pp. 119 seq. It may be observed that Buddha is mentioned in this account, exceptionally as it were, under the name of *Jina*, although several centuries after Varāha Mihira Buddhism still flourished to such an extent in India that, as we have seen in the preceding pages, Arab authors used the word *Bodd* to designate an idol and a Buddha. Although in Sindh a Brahmanic dynasty had as early as A.D. 626 superseded a Buddhistic one, the mass of the population there, as well as in many other parts of India, persevered for a considerable time longer in the profession of Buddhism<sup>56</sup> :—

"If the statue of Rāma, the son of Dosaratha, or of Bali, the son of Virotchana, be made, it is necessary to give to the statue (a height of) 120 fingers, measured according to nature. For the statue of any other personage a reduction of one-tenth is to be made, that is to say, a length of 108 fingers is to be adopted.

"The statue of Vishnu has sometimes eight hands, sometimes four, and sometimes two. The figure of Sri (his wife Lakshmi) is placed under his left nipple. If you give eight hands to Vishnu, you will put into the first of his hands, on the right side, a sword, and into the second a club of gold or of iron.... On the left side the statue will carry a shield, a bow, the *tchakra*, and a conch.<sup>57</sup> When

<sup>55</sup> No picture is given.

<sup>56</sup> *Fragments Arabes*, &c., p. xx., and *Mém. géogr.*, &c., p. 176.

<sup>57</sup> To this passage Reinaud observes that Albyrūny expresses the conch (*shank* of modern travellers, and the *śankha* of Sanskrit writers) by the word شَنْق, which he sometimes also spells شَنْك. The merchant Sulaymān also particularly mentions the *shank*, which served as a trumpet. It is the marine conch, which, under the name of *śankha*, is one of the attributes of Vishnu, and answers, according to Albyrūny, to the curved shell called by the Persians 'white shell,' *sepyd mehrreh*, سفید مهره.

the statue has only four hands the bow and arrows are suppressed ; if only two be given to it, the fingers of the right hand are to be held spread out, and in the left it is to hold a conch.

“ The statue of Baladeva, بلادیو, brother of Narayan (Vishnu) wears a pendant in each ear, and its eyes are those of a drunken man.

“ When Narayana and Baladeva are represented together, it will be proper to add to them their sister Bhagavati (the MS. has نهکبت). The left hand of the latter will be supported by the haunch without touching the sides ; in her right hand she will hold a lotus flower. In case four hands should be given to her, she shall bear in one of her hands, on the right, a rosary, and the other hand is to have the fingers spread out ; on the left side she is to hold in one of her hands a lotus leaf. In case she should have received eight hands, she is to bear on the left side a *kamandalu*, کمندل, that is to say, a pot with a lotus, a bow, and a leaf ; on the right side she is to support a rosary, a mirror, and an arrow ; the last of her hands is to have the fingers spread out.

“ Śaṅba, سانبا, the son of Vishnu, will have only a club in his right hand. But his brother Pradyumna will hold an arrow in his right hand, and a bow in his left. When they are represented with their wife, they will carry a sword in the right hand, and a buckler in the left.

“ Brahma must have four faces, each turned towards one of the cardinal points. He is to be placed on a lotus, and to hold a pot in one of his hands,

“ Skanda, اسکند, the son of Mahādeva (Shiva), is represented with the countenance of a child, mounted on a peacock. In one hand he holds a *śakti*, شکتم, that is to say, a kind of sword which pierces with both ends. The handle of this sword is placed in the middle, as on the pestle of a mortar.

“ Indra carries a weapon made of diamond and called *vajra* (diamond) ; its handle is to be arranged like that of the *śakti*, and in such a manner that the two swords meet in the handle. Indra has a third eye on the forehead, and he is mounted on a white elephant armed with four tusks.

“ Mahādeva (Shiva) has also a third eye on the forehead. His head is surmounted by a crescent. He holds in his hand a weapon called *śula*, شول, in the form of a club but terminating in three points ;

moreover he carries a sword. With the left hand he seizes his wife Gauri, گور, the daughter of Hemamanta, هممنت, and holds her pressed to his bosom.

"If you make a statue of *Jina*, جن, that is to say,—of Buddha,—endeavour to impart to him a pleasing figure and well-shaped limbs. He must have the palms of his hands and the soles of his feet in the shape of a lotus. You will represent him seated, with grey hair, and breathing an air of goodness, as if he were the father of all creatures. If the figure of an Arhanta, ارهنت, is to be given to the Buddha, he is to be represented as a young man, naked, with a handsome figure and an agreeable physiognomy. He is to have his two hands supported by the knees, and his wife Sri (Yasodhára) is to be placed beneath his left nipple.

"Revanta, ريونت, the son of the Sun, is to be represented mounted on horseback, as if he were to go to the chase.

"Yama, چم, the god of death, is riding on a male buffalo and holds a mace in his hand.

"Kuvera, كبر, the guardian of riches, wears a crown on his head; his body is large, his sides broad, and he gets himself carried on the back of a man.

"The Sun is represented with a face as red as the marrow of a red lotus; his bosom shines like a ruby, his limbs are distinct, and he wears pendants in his ears. A pearl necklace hangs from his neck to his breast. On his head there is a crown, like that of high personages. In each hand he holds a lotus. According to the fashion of the inhabitants of northern regions, his garments descend down to the soles.

"Lastly, if you desire to represent the images of the seven mothers (*matri*), they are all to be united. Brahman (*Brahmi*) is (like Brahma) to have four faces, each turned to another side; Kaunari is to have six faces; Vaishnavi is to receive four hands; to Varahi you are to give a pig's head and a man's body; Indrani (Aindri) is to have a great many eyes with a club in the hand. Bhagavati (Maheswari) will be represented seated as we usually sit. As to Tehamunda, you are to impart to her an aspect of deformity; her canine teeth are to protrude from the mouth, and she is to look emaciated.

"The two sons of Mahádeva are not to be forgotten:—Kshetra Palu, كشتير پال, is to have his hair bristling, a severe expression, and unsmooth features. As to Vináyaka, بنايك, he is to have an elephant-head on a man's body with four hands.

"Moreover, each deity has its special priests. The servants of Vishnu are called Bhágavata بهاكبت; those of the Sun, Maga, that is to say Magi (مك and مچوس), and those of Mahádeva, Bherava (the text has برار). The latter lead a life of mortification, allow their hair to grow, smear their body with ashes, carry about human bones, and wander in the jungles. The name of Brahmans is given to the adherents of Ashta matrya ('the eight *matri*'), that of Samanccans to the Buddhists, and that of ... (تكى) to the followers of Arhanta (the MS. has اذھنت)."

It may be observed that the name of Krishna, whose worship is so popular during the present age, does not occur here, and Varáhamihira himself mentions it only once. It appears that the exact period when Krishna obtained a place in the Hindu pantheon cannot be ascertained, and no convincing proofs have yet been adduced whether such had already been the case at the time of Alexander's invasion, as some would have it, or after the full development of Brahmanism, as others believe. Reinaud was of opinion that if the worship of Krishna had begun to flourish during the fifth or sixth century, when the Brahmans commenced to prevail over the Buddhists, there is much probability that they made use of this romantic personage in order to move the minds of the masses, and to overturn the party of their adversaries. Prof. Dr. A. Weber had, in his dissertation on the Birth-festival of Krishna, studied numerous works which led him to the conclusion that "the *eleventh* century would be obtained as the period for which the *celebration of the festival* appears to be vouched for as *certain*. Moreover, the *consensus* of so many works of this kind leads us, after all, probably somewhat higher, since such a universal acknowledgment of the festival appears to warrant the conclusion that it was at the time of their composition a *generally* received one; whence, again, the further suggestion presents itself that 'the *institution*, or rather the *introduction*, of it belongs to a *yet earlier* time.'"<sup>58</sup> Lassen was of opinion that the *Bhagavad-Gita* must have been composed in the third century, and that the passages in the *Mahábhárata* in which Krishna has divine honours attributed to him are of later origin, and that the Krishna *cultus* proper is not found before the fifth or sixth century.<sup>59</sup>

Now I shall proceed to the translation of that portion of Muḥammad 'Al-Shahrastány's (born A.H. 479, A.D. 1086; died A.H. 548, A.D. 1153)

<sup>58</sup> See my translation "On the Kṛṣṇajānmashtami, or Krishna's Birth-festival, by Prof. A. Weber," *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. VI., p. 179.

<sup>59</sup> *Indische Alterthumskunde*, Vol. I., p. 623.

"Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects," *كتاب المال والاعمال*, which treats on the religions and philosophy of India. Of this important work we possess not only the Arabic text, edited by Cureton, but also the German translation of Haarbrücker; and, as has already been hinted, we shall have occasion to see how the statements of the *Kitāb-al-fihrist*, some of which were used, have been supplemented by additional information.

*Al-Shahrastāni.*

(pp. ۴۴۴—۴۴۸.)

"We have already recorded that the Hindus are a large nation with a great religion. Their opinions are of different kinds. Some of them are Barāhamah  
 Opinions of the Hindus. *البراهمة* [Brahmans], who altogether deny prophecies; some of them incline to materialism, *المادهر*; whilst others profess dualism, *مذهب الذنوبية*, which is said to have been the religion of Abraham (on whom be peace!); but most of them adhere to the ways and tenets of the Çābyans. Some profess to be spiritualists, some assume mansions, and others adore idols, so that they differ only in the form of the doctrines they have invented, and in the quality of the figures (of the idols) which they have set up. Some of them are philosophers, according to the manner of the Greeks, in theory and in practice; and as to those of them who adhere to the principles of materialism, dualism, and Çābyanism, the discussion of those tenets before [in a previous portion of the work] allows us to dispense with an indication of their doctrines [in this place]; those, however, who differ from them in views and opinions are of five classes:—The Barāhamah, the spiritualists, the possessors of temples, worshippers of idols, and philosophers, whose opinions we shall now record as we found them in their well-known books.

"Some imagine that they were called Barāhamah from some connection with Abraham (on whom be peace!);  
 The Barāhamah. but that is a mistake, because it is a peculiarity of these people to altogether deny prophecies: how then could they acknowledge Abraham, and the people among the Hindus who believed in the prophetship of Abraham? Then there are among them the dualists, who hold the tenets about light and darkness according to the sect of dualists whose religion we have described [in a former part of the book], only that these Barāhamah are descendants



of a man among them whose name was Barhám, برهام, who expounded to them the total negation of prophecies, and demonstrated to them the impossibility thereof according to reason, on various grounds, some of which he stated as follows:—‘That which an apostle promulgates must be of either of the two following kinds: it must be reasonable or unreasonable; if the former, our common sense will suffice to grasp it and to attain it; what need then have we for an apostle? But if the latter, it will not be acceptable, since the acceptance of what is unreasonable is an overstepping of the bounds of humanity, and an entering into the illicit region of animality. Another ground is this:—Reason informs us that God (Whose name be exalted!) is a sage, but a sage exacts only such duties from the people as are indicated to them by their understanding; but the indications presented by the intellect show that the world has an omniscient, omnipotent, and all-wise Maker, and that He confers on His worshippers favours that demand gratitude; so that when we contemplate by the aid of our intellects the miracles of His creation we ought to thank Him for the benefits He has granted us. Accordingly when we have known and thanked Him we deserve His reward; but if we have denied and disbelieved Him we deserve His punishment. What need then have we to follow a man like ourselves? If he commands us that which we have mentioned concerning the knowledge of and gratitude to God, we are by our own intellects made independent of him; but if he orders us to do the contrary thereof his words plainly point to his falsity. A further ground is this:—The intellect points to an all-wise Maker, but a sage will not exact duties from the people which are disgraceful according to their intellects. The founders of religions have nevertheless enjoined ordinances that appear disgraceful to the intellect: such, for instance, as turning towards a particular house during worship, the walking round it, the running, the throwing of stones, the putting on of the Elhram [pilgrim’s dress], the Talabbayyah [shouting Labbayka,] the kissing of the dumb [inanimate] stone, as well as the slaughtering of animals for sacrifice, the prohibition of that which may serve as food to man, the permission of what may hurt the constitution, &c.; all of which things are contrary to the judgments of reason. A further ground is this:—The greatest transgression in apostleship is that you should obey a man who is like yourself in stature, in soul and intellect, who eats as you do, and drinks as you do; nevertheless you occupy with reference to him the position of a stone which he

takes up or puts down, or a beast which he drives forward or pulls back, or a slave to whom he issues his commands and prohibitions. Then by what difference from you, or by what excellence of him over you, are you bound to obey him? What is the argument for the truth of his pretensions? If you are deluded merely by his assertions, verily there is no difference between one assertion and another: but if you have been overcome by his arguments and miraculous assertions, verily we possess numberless statements concerning the peculiarities of qualities and substances, as well as instructors about the mysteries of invisible things, the instructions about which are unequalled. "Their apostles have said to them: Verily we are only human beings like yourselves, but God bestoweth His gifts on those of His servants whom He willeth"<sup>60</sup>; but if you confess that the world has a wise Creator and Maker, then confess that He is also the judge of His creation, and that there is a command and decision of His for everything we do, vow, know, or think. Nor is every human intellect prepared to understand His command, or to receive His decision; but [in lieu of creating all intellects of the same capacity] His bounty required that there should be an arrangement of intellects and souls, and His decree made it necessary that some of them should be raised "degrees above the others, that the one may take the other to serve him, but the mercy of thy Lord is more valuable than the [riches] which they gather together;"<sup>61</sup> and the great mercy of the Lord is prophecy and apostleship, and this is more valuable than what they gather with their intellects."

"Of them are the adherents of the Buddadah [*i.e.* Buddhists, the word Buddadah being the plural of Budd; a statue first of Buddha, and by extension any other idol]; and of them are the adherents of meditation, and of them are the adherents of metempsychosis.

"Among them Budd means an individual in this world who is not born, does not marry, does not eat, does not drink, does not become decrepit, and does not die. The name of the first Budd who appeared in the world was Shákmyñ, شاكمين [Çakyamúni], which means 'the noble prince;' and from the time of his appearance to that of the Hġjret five thousand years have elapsed [!]. They state that under the degree of the Budd is that of the Bódysa'yah, البوديسعية [Bodhisattva], which means 'the man who seeks the way of the truth';

<sup>60</sup> Korġin XIV. 13.

<sup>61</sup> Ibidem, XLIII. 31.

this degree is attained by patience, by alms, by striving for what it is necessary to strive after, by abstinence and isolation from the world, by keeping aloof from its lusts and pleasures, by abstinence from what is prohibited in it, by compassion for all created beings, and by avoiding the ten transgressions—namely, taking the life of any living being, covetousness of the goods of others [euphemism for stealing], fornication, mendacity, calumny, obscenity, insulting expressions and epithets, foolishness, and denial of a requital in the next world; and by practising the ten virtues—the first of which is benevolence and magnanimity; the second, pardoning offences, and warding off anger by meekness; the third, refraining from worldly desires; the fourth, meditating on purification from this perishable for the imperishable world; the fifth, exercising the intellect by science, culture, and manifold contemplation of the sequels of things; the sixth, the power to employ the soul in striving after exalted matters; the seventh, soft words and fair speech to everybody; the eighth, pleasing intercourse with brethren by preferring their opinions to one's own; the ninth, total isolation from mankind, and turning to the truth entirely; and the tenth, abandoning the spirit from a craving for the truth, and for union with the lord of truth. They believe that the Buddadah had come to them according to the number of the river K̄yl الكيل<sup>62</sup>, and that they had come to them with the sciences, appearing to them at various times as incarnations, but only in royal families, on account of the nobleness of their essence. They assent, without any difference, to what is recorded concerning them about the eternity of the world, as well as about their belief in the requital [in the next world], as we have reported. The appearance of the Buddadah is peculiar to the country of Hind, on account of the great variety of its regions and climates, as well as of the multitude of persons devoted to asceticism and religious striving. Budd, as they describe him, resembles, if they have spoken the truth, only Khider,<sup>63</sup> whom the professors of Islām acknowledge.

“These are the men of science among them, who know the sphere, the stars and the decisions connected with them. The method of Hindus is contrary to that of the Greek and the Persian astronomers, because they draw most of their decisions from the con-

<sup>62</sup> A mistake for الكنك, the Ganges; see also footnote 52; as the Ganges has seven branches, so there were seven Buddhas.

<sup>63</sup> His adventures with Moses are narrated in the XVIIIth Surah of the Korān.

junctions of the fixed in lieu of the moving stars (i.e. planets), deriving their decisions from the peculiarities of the stars, and not from their natures. They consider Saturn to be 'the greatest luck,' on account of his high position and large size, and to bestow general benefits as well as partial misfortunes. Thus all the stars have their own natures and peculiarities; but the Greeks draw their decisions from the former, and the Hindus from the latter. The case is the same with their medical science, as they consider the peculiarities of diseases, and not their nature, wherein the Greeks differ from them.

"These adherents of meditation think very highly of it, and assert that it mediates between physical and metaphysical things, because the forms of physical things, and likewise the truths of metaphysical things, are referable to it; accordingly it is the receptacle of the two sciences of both worlds [the visible and the invisible]; hence they strive most diligently until they separate imagination and meditation from physical things by practising a great deal of self-subjugation [asceticism] with laudable efforts, so that when meditation becomes emancipated from this world the next world is revealed to it; thus meditation may give tidings of the mysteries of affairs, and may acquire the power of withholding rain, or may cause imagination so to overwhelm a living man that it kills him instantly. This ought not to be surprising, because imagination exerts wonderful influence on the movements of the body [which is governed by the soul], and action is in the soul [which in its turn may be overpowered by imagination]. Is not the effect of the evil eye an act of the imagination in a man? Does it not happen that a man walking on a high wall falls down instantly, without stepping in any manner different from that in which he walks on the ground? When imagination works alone it performs wonderful feats; to accomplish this the Hindus keep their eyes shut for many days and nights, lest meditation and imagination should be distracted by physical things. When in this isolation another imagination joins it, both work together, especially if they agree extremely well with each other; for this reason they are, in an emergency, in the habit of assembling forty men of unblemished character, intimate with each other, and of the same opinion concerning that which has happened; whereupon the weighty business which was difficult to them to bear becomes plain, and the hard trial, the load of which pressed on them, is removed.

"The Bakrantynyah means 'those who are girded with iron.'

The Bakrantynyah. Their tenets require them to shave their heads and beards, to bare their bodies,

except the sexual parts, and to gird their bodies, from the middle to the breast, lest their bellies should burst, from their great science, their impetuous imagination, and the force of meditation. Perhaps they have discovered some property in iron which it has in common with imaginations; how else could it prevent the bursting of the belly, and how could much science make it necessary?

"We have already mentioned the tenets of the adherents of metempsychosis, nor is there any religion in which metempsychosis has not a firm footing; only the methods of demonstrating it are different. The faith of the

Adherents of metempsychosis.

Hindus in metempsychosis was strengthened

when they beheld a bird making its appearance at an appointed time, alighting on a tree, laying eggs, and producing little ones. When the bird had thus propagated its species, it rubbed its beak and talons together, whereupon fire issued from them and consumed the bird. During this process of cremation oil had distilled from the bird, which accumulated in a hole at the root of the tree. When a year has elapsed, and the time of the re-appearance of the bird is at hand, one like the first is formed from this oil; it flies about, settles on the tree, &c., and this goes on for ever. They say that within the universe and its inhabitants in the circles and rings [thereof] nothing occurs except in this manner: [thus for instance] they assert that, as the movements of the spheres are undoubtedly circular, the point of the compass arrives there where it began from, and describes a second circle upon the first which is undoubtedly identical therewith. Nor will there be any difference between the two circles, unless a difference be assumed between the two effects: but these are repeated as they had begun, so that the stars and spheres rotate around the first centre, and their distances, conjunctions, aspects, and relations do not differ in any way: it is therefore necessary that neither the effects originating from them should differ in any way; and this is the metempsychosis of circles and rings. There is a difference among them concerning the [duration of the] greatest circle [or period] in the number of years, the majority reckoning it to consist of thirty thousand, whilst others assign to it three hundred and sixty thousand years. In these circles they take into account the motion of the fixed stars, but not of the planets. Most Hindus also believe that the celestial sphere is composed of water, fire, and wind, and that the stars therein are fiery, airy, and that, excepting only the earthy element, the upper existences are not subject to annihilation.

"Among the Hindus there is a community which has established spiritual mediators, who come to them with a message from God (Whose name be glorified and honoured !); they come in the form of human beings and bring no book; they command some things, and forbid some things; they establish a religious law for the people, and explain its limits. The veracity of such a man is known by freedom from the frailties of the world, and by his abstaining from food, drink, sexual intercourse, &c.

Spiritualists.

"They believe their apostle to be a spiritual angel who came down to earth in the form of a man. He commanded them to magnify fire, to make to it offerings of perfumes, odours, oils, and victims; to abstain from murder, and not to slaughter any animal except as due to fire. He made it a law for them to put on a string, which they knot together from their right till its ends meet under their left shoulder. He prohibited to them also mendacity, the drinking of wine, or eating food with persons not of their own religion, and eating of animals slaughtered by such persons; but he allowed to them adultery, lest their posterity might be cut off. He ordered them to make an idol resembling him; to approach it, to adore it, and to walk round it every day thrice, with musical instruments, fumigation, song and dance. He ordered them to magnify cows, and to worship them whenever they perceived any, and to take refuge in penitence by stroking them. He also enjoined the people not to go beyond the river Ganges.

The Basuyah.<sup>64</sup>

"They believe their apostle to be a spiritual angel in human form, and his name is Bahuvadh.<sup>65</sup> He came riding on a bull, having on his head a crown made of human skulls, and wearing a necklace of the same material.

The Bahuvadyah.

In one of his hands he held a human cranium, and in the other a trident. He ordered them to adore the Creator (Whose name be honoured and glorified !), and his own self likewise, by making an idol resembling him, which they should worship; they should not abominate anything, as all things are of the same kind, made by the Creator; they should take human bones as necklaces, as well as crowns of the same, and wear them on their heads; they should smear their bodies and heads with ashes. He prohibited them from slaughtering victims and from accumu-

<sup>64</sup> The word transliterated above is spelt *الباسوية* in Cureton's edition, but Haarbrücker, p. 363, has *Bāsuvīya*, which is indeed closer to *Vaishnavya* than the above.

<sup>65</sup> Paṇpati—Siva? Haarbrücker, p. 364.

lating riches ; he commanded them to spurn the world, and not to live therein except by alms.

"They believed their apostle to have been a spiritual angel named Shiba, شب, who had come to them in human form, smeared with ashes,

The Kábalyah.

and wearing on his head a conical mitre of red wool, three spans in length, and encircled

with skull-bones ; he had on his neck a collar of human bones, a girdle of the same material, as well as bracelets and anklets thereof, but a nude body. He ordered them to wear a costume and ornaments like himself, and established for them a law with the limits [regulations] thereof.

"They say Bahádún was a great angel who came to us in the form of a great man, and he had two brothers who slew him, and made of his

The Bahádúnyah.

skin the earth, and of his bones the mountains, and from his blood the sea ; but this

is said to be a mystery, or else the human form could not have sufficed for this degree [of extension so that both land and sea were formed of it]. Bahádún is represented riding on a beast ; he has so much hair that some of it hangs over his face, whilst some of it hangs on each side of it equally, as well as on the back of his head ; he ordered them to do the same, making it a law not to drink wine, to flee at the sight of a woman, to go on pilgrimage to a mountain called Jaura'n," on which there is a great house [temple] containing the statue of Bahádún. There are attendants of that temple, who alone possess the key of it, so that the people can enter only with their permission. When they open the door they stop their mouths, so that their breath cannot reach the idol ; they slaughter victims for it, approach to it offerings, and present to it gifts. When they return from the pilgrimage they neither enter inhabited places on their road, nor look at forbidden things, nor approach any one with evil or injury in words and deeds.

"There is no tradition among the Hindus about astrolatry except concerning two sects which have turned towards the two lights, namely,

Star-worshippers.

the sun and the moon, wherein their tenets resemble the tenets of the Qábryah in their

turning towards the heavenly mansions and excluding the majesty of God.

"The sun-worshippers believe that the sun is one of the angels endued with a soul and intellect, who imparts light to the stars, brilliancy to

°° Mentioned also elsewhere—see foot-note 51.

the world, and produces the lower existences. He is the king of the firmament, deserving of glorification, adoration, fumigation, and invocation. They are called Al-Dynky tyah, آلهة الشمس, that is to say, 'the sun-worshippers.' According to their law, they take for a god an idol holding in its hand a precious stone of the colour of fire. He has a special temple built in his name, to which revenues from landed estates and villages are attached, as well as guardians and officers; and they come to the temple, where they pray thrice; also decrepit and sick persons arrive, who fast for the idol, pray to it, and invoke it for the purpose of recovery."

"The moon-worshippers believe that the moon is one of the angels



reason the spiritualists [or worshippers of spiritual beings] and the astrolaters have constructed idols which they believed to represent the absent objects of their adoration ; in short, such is the case whenever idols have been set up ; so that they are constructed according to the form, shape, or figure of the objects as representing them and standing in their place ; as we certainly know that no reasonable man would carve a piece of wood with his own hand, and then believe it to be his god, his creator and the creator of all, because his own existence would thus precede the existence of his maker, his figure having been produced by the carver's art. When the people devoted themselves to the worship of idols and connected their affairs with them without any permission, approbation, reason or power to do so, from God (Whose name be exalted !), their devoting themselves and worship and imploring [idols] in their affairs is an attribution of divinity to them. Wherefore they said 'we worship them only that they may bring us nearer unto God.'<sup>69</sup> If they were in their [worship of] simulacres to confine themselves to the belief of Majesty and Deity, they would not go beyond them to the Lord of Lords.

"They have an idol called Mahákál, مهكالكال,<sup>70</sup> with four hands.

The Mahákályah.

much hair dangling from the head, one of its hands is a large serpent,

open mouth, in the other a staff, in the third a human skull, which is repelled by the fourth. In its two ears there are two serpents, each with two earrings, and on its body there are two large serpents, one around it ; on its head is a diadem of skull bones, and on his head, a collar of the same materials. They believe him to be a god, deserving of worship on account of his great power, as well as both his good and his bad qualities ; for his giving and withholding beneficence and maleficence, and because he is a refuge to them in their necessities. He has great temples in India, which the adherents of his sect visit thrice daily ; they worship him and walk round him. They have a large place called Akhtar, اختر,<sup>71</sup> containing a large idol in the shape of this idol, to which they come from all parts to worship it there, and to ask for worldly necessities, so that a man says in his prayers :—'Marry me to such and such a woman and give me such

<sup>69</sup> Korán XXXIX. 4.

<sup>70</sup> Confor this with the *Kitáb-al-fihrist* here, or text p. ۳۴۸.

<sup>71</sup> Both Haarbrücker and Reinaud (*Mém.* p. 292) consider this to be Ojajn, اوجين.

and such a thing." Some of them visit the idol, remaining there days and nights without eating anything, and asking for something until it perhaps actually happens.

The Barkas-hykyah adopt for themselves an idol which they worship and to which they offer gifts; and for the place of their worship of it they search for a high and thick tree, such as are in the mountains, and selecting the handsomest and longest of them, they constitute that place the spot of their adoration. Hereupon they take the idol and carry it to a large tree of those trees, selecting on it a place for setting up the idol; then they worship and walk round that tree.

recitation. When he wishes to depart he agitates the water with his hand, besprinkling his head, face, and whole body whilst departing, then he worships and goes away.<sup>74</sup>

The Agniwátryah, namely, the worshippers of fire, believe that fire is the greatest of the elements in body, the widest in extent, the highest in position, the noblest in its essence, the most luminous in light, and the most subtle in its volume and nature; that it is more needed than any other substances in nature, that there is no light in the world except through it, no life, no growth, no connection except by commingling therewith. They worship fire by digging a quadrangular pit in the earth and placing it therein; they do not fail to throw into it savoury food, pleasant beverages, nice garments, aromatic perfumes, and costly jewels, as a means of approaching it and obtaining blessings from it, but they hold it illicit to throw living beings into it or to burn bodies therein, contrary to the tenets of another community of Hindu ascetics; and according to this sect most of the kings and grandees of the Hindus magnify the fire for the sake of its essence with abundant magnifying, and prefer it to all other existing things. Among them are also ascetics and worshippers who sit around the fire fasting, and obstructing their nostrils so that no breath issuing from an impure breast may reach it. It is their religious law to promote good and to suppress bad qualities, namely mendacity, envy, hatred, quarrelsomeness, unrighteousness, and impudence, so that when a man emancipates himself from them he approaches the fire, and obtains proximity thereto.

The Greek philosopher Pythagoras had a disciple named Kalánús, who, after learning wisdom from him and being his disciple, went to one of the cities of India, where he propagated the doctrine

<sup>74</sup> There were also other spots besides Prayaga where Hindus sacrificed their lives, and one of them is thus described by Maçúdi (*Mém. géogr. &c.*, p. 230):—"It is said that the Hindus who wish to die in the Ganges betake themselves to a certain spot of the upper part of its course, among steep mountains and trees bared of their leaves. Near at hand there are men who preach renunciation of the world and the advantages of another life. Iron spits and swords are fixed on trees or posts destined for this purpose. Hindus who come from the most distant provinces listen to the sermons of these preachers, placed on the river-bank; then they precipitate themselves from the height of the mountains upon the trees and iron spits, and fall piece-meal into the river."

<sup>75</sup> The word *طرية* (Agnihotra) is probably formed from Agnihotra: Haahrbrücker. See on this sect and the preceding ones the transl. of the *Dabestán* by D. Shea, Vol. II. pp. 242 seq.

When he had explained to them the system and had demonstrated it with satisfactory arguments, they became very zealous. He also said to them, "The abandonment of the pleasures of this world will procure you those of the next, so that you will join it and be received in the ranks thereof, enjoying its pleasures and delights for ever." Accordingly the Hindus accepted this speech and it took root in their hearts; then Brahmanan was taken away from them by death, but his doctrine had, on account of their great anxiety, and on account of their haste to participate in that world, already become incarnated in their minds. They became, however, divided into two sects, one of which said that in this world there can be no sin more evident than sexual propagation, because it results from physical pleasure and is the fruit of the sperm of lust; wherefore it is illicit, as well as the savoury food and the generous beverage, with everything else that excites lust, physical pleasure, and awakens the animal spirits. Accordingly they limited themselves to a small quantity of food, just sufficient to support their bodies, whilst some of them disregarded even that slender allowance in order the more quickly to reach the upper world; and others, who perceived that their life had indeed been defiled, threw themselves into the fire as a purification of their soul, an ablution of the body, and a liberation of the mind; and, lastly, others collected the enjoyments of the world, such as food, drink, raiment, and the like, placing them before their eyes, so that at the sight thereof the animal spirit may be moved to covet these things, whilst the force of the rational spirit prohibits the enjoyment of them, until the body becomes emaciated and the spirit weakened, so that they separate on account of the slenderness of the bonds which had united them.

---

<sup>76</sup> He is mentioned also in the "Indika of Megasthenes." See *Ind. Antiquary*, Vol. VI., p. 334.

The other sect [on the contrary] believed sexual propagation, food, drink, and every other pleasure to be lawful according to the right way of using them, and but few overstepped this way by excess. There were adherents of both parties who followed the philosophical and scientific system of Pythagoras, so that they improved themselves to be able to perceive the good and the evil in the souls of their companions, and to give accounts thereof; thereby the latter were incited in their zeal for the practice of meditation, and of the subjugation of evil desires, in order to attain that [degree of perfection] which their [more advanced] companions had attained. Their tenet about the Creator (whose name be exalted!) is that He is pure light, but that He has put on a body for a covering so that only he who is deserving of it may behold Him, just as when in this world anybody dresses himself in the skin of a beast; so that on putting it on, any person whose sight alights on him may see him, but when he does not put it on, no one can see him. They imagine that they are like prisoners in this world, and that he who contends against the lusting spirit, so as to keep it off from its pleasures, is saved from the sins of the lower world, but that he who does not keep it off remains a prisoner therein, and that he who desires to contend against all this is able to do so by renouncing pride and self-complacency, by quenching lust and covetousness, and by keeping aloof from everything pointing and leading to them. When Alexander arrived in that country and desired to make war against it, he experienced difficulty in conquering the city of one of these two sects, namely that which considers the use of the pleasures of this world licit as long as they are not injurious to the body; but he strove until he had conquered the city and slain many wise men of it; and they saw the bodies of their slain people as if they were bodies of white, pure fishes which are in the fresh water; and when they saw this they repented of their acts and let the remaining ones alone. The second sect, which believed that there is no good in the taking of women and begetting progeny, nor in any carnal pleasures, wrote a letter to Alexander in which they praised him for his love of wisdom, for adherence to knowledge, and for his honouring men of intellect; they asked from him a wise man who might dispute with them; accordingly he despatched to them one whom they excelled in speculation as well as in practice, whereupon Alexander departed, but sent them costly offerings and noble gifts; and they said, "If wisdom has such an effect on kings in this world, how would it be if we were to devote ourselves thereto as we ought, so as to adhere to it perfectly?"

Their disputations which have just been alluded to are recorded in the writings of Aristotle. One of their religious customs is to look at the rising sun, to adore it and to say :—"How beautiful is thy light! How brilliant! How illuminating! Human eyes cannot enjoy the sight of thee! If thou art the first light, above which there is no other light, then glory and praise are due to thee; then we seek thee and hasten to thee in order to attain an abode near thee, to contemplate thy highest creation. But if there be above thee one higher than thou, another light by which thou hast been caused, then this glory and this praise is due to it; but we have hastened and have left all the pleasures of this world to become like thee, to reach thy world, and to join thy habitations. If that which has been caused is so full of glory and of majesty, what then will be the glory, the majesty, the praiseworthiness, and the perfection of the cause! It is the duty of every seeker to abandon all enjoyment in order to attain close proximity to it, and to enter into the communion of its companions and associates."

#### TIRTHAS.

According to the statement of Albyrúny<sup>77</sup> the Hindus have no obligatory pilgrimage like the Moslems. Any person desirous of undertaking a pious journey goes to some place renowned for its purity, or to some idol, or perhaps to the banks of some river considered holy for the purpose of performing ablutions, paying homage to an idol, making offerings, reciting prayers, fasting, bestowing gifts on Brahmans and servants of temples, shaving the head and beard. After completing all the customary ceremonies the pilgrim travels home again. Albyrúny expresses himself as follows :—"In various localities, which enjoy special consideration, the Hindus construct tanks where they go to purify themselves. These tanks are places of such admirable workmanship that our countrymen are, on beholding them, seized with admiration, and, far from being able to construct similar ones, they are scarcely able to describe those which exist. The walls consist of large blocks of stone, symmetrically arranged, and connected by iron bars. Steps lead down to the bottom of the tank, and the whole is so arranged that the bathers may go up and down without confusion." Albyrúny mentions, according to the Puráṇas, first of all, the tanks situated near the sources of the Ganges, to which pilgrims crowd through snows and frosts. Then he mentions the tanks of Tanésser, which he says

---

<sup>77</sup> *Mém. géogr. scient. et hist.*, Reinaud, p. 286.

bears the name of Korukter,<sup>78</sup> which means the field of Koru. These places, continues Albyrúny, acquired new lustre afterwards, during the wars of the Pándavas and the Kauravas; he, and before him Hiwen Thsang, mentioned also the tank of Multán, which was less visited by pilgrims after the Musalman invasion than in ancient times. Benares was, according to Albyrúny, likewise a city of great sanctity to which the Hindus went on pilgrimage from the most distant localities, nearly in the same manner as Muhammadans go to Mekkah. The greatest ambition of the Hindus was to be able to die in this city; in fact, says Albyrúny, every criminal who succeeded in planting his foot within its holy precincts was safe from pursuit, and persons who expired there had much less cause to dread the wrath of God for their past faults.

---

<sup>78</sup> کرکتر or کروچہتر in Sanskrit *Kurukshetra*, and Hindustani *Kurukhet*.

---

